



Director of
Intelligence

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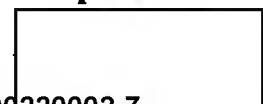


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25 May 1979

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CHINA-LAOS: Relations

//China has signaled its intent to support an anti-Vietnamese opposition in Laos by introducing a new "Lao Socialist Party." The party purportedly opposes both the Vietnamese presence in Laos and the pro-Vietnamese government in Vientiane.

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The Lao Socialist Party first appeared last week when it broadcast a message over the Pol Pot regime's radio, "Voice of Democratic Kampuchea." The new party said it would oppose the Vietnamese and their "stooges" in Laos. It criticized the government in Vientiane for carrying out "abominable incidents" against the Chinese and for "following in the wake of the Vietnamese regional hegemonists and the Soviet hegemonists." Like the Kampuchean radio station, which is located in China, the new party is clearly Beijing's creation; we cannot confirm that it is now anything more than a Chinese media device.

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//The creation of an anti-Vietnamese Lao party marks a departure from China's policy of tolerating the current Laotian Government. Since China's attack on Vietnam earlier this year, the Lao have taken an openly anti-Chinese attitude and relations between Beijing and Vientiane have cooled markedly.

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Beijing's apparent intent is to create anxiety in Vientiane and Hanoi over the prospect of Chinese support for subversion in Laos. Beijing has not yet mentioned the new Lao party in its own media, however, an indication that the Chinese will move cautiously.

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There has been relatively little resistance in the provinces bordering China, although the Chinese may be able to stimulate some anti-Vientiane activity among northern minorities. It could take years to mould the various insurgent groups into a unified and coordinated organization.

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KAMPUCHEA: Recognition Issue

The Vietnamese-supported Heng Samrin regime in Kampuchea may challenge the credentials of the Pol Pot government when the Coordinating Bureau of the Nonaligned Movement meets early next month. Recognition by members of the Nonaligned Movement would provide international legitimacy for the Heng Samrin regime and would be a major victory for Vietnam and a defeat for China, which supports Pol Pot. Thus far, only the USSR and its supporters recognize Heng Samrin.

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Both the Pol Pot and Heng Samrin regimes have increased efforts to gain international recognition before the June meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka, that is preparatory to the full conference this September in Havana. Only Pol Pot's Democratic Kampuchea--the government recognized by the UN--was invited to attend the conference,

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The USSR and Vietnam are leading the effort to garner support for Heng Samrin. They are pressing India for recognition,

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China and the Pol Pot forces, recognizing the possibility of a challenge at Colombo, are engaged in their own diplomatic offensive.

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Failure to secure Indian recognition before the conference would be a major setback for Heng Samrin. Rather than risk defeat at the conference or a compromise that seats both regimes as observers, the Heng Samrin regime and its patrons may elect to postpone a challenge. Fewer than 20 states currently recognize Heng Samrin, and few Nonaligned Movement members would welcome a disruptive debate on the credentials issue.

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EAST GERMANY - ZAMBIA: High-Level Military Visit

//A 20-man East German military delegation led by Defense Minister Hoffmann visited Zambia early this week; it was the largest foreign military visit to Zambia in recent years. Hoffmann made effusive promises of military assistance, and the delegation was given substantial front-page coverage by the Zambian press. The publicity was designed to show the Zambian public that President Kaunda has friends who can supply Zambia's military needs in the face of the recent intensification of Rhodesian raids. Five officers stayed behind in Zambia, while the rest of the delegation proceeded to Mozambique on Wednesday. East German leader Honecker led a large East German delegation to Zambia and Mozambique three months ago. East German assistance to Zambia thus far has been small,

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NEPAL: Referendum

King Birendra's decision, announced yesterday, to hold a referendum on Nepal's future form of government is a major concession to students and others who have been demonstrating for democratic reforms. These demonstrators--particularly those loyal to B.P. Koirala, the country's most prominent opposition politician--may be placated temporarily. Koirala has said his Nepali Congress Party will participate in the referendum and has called on other parties to do so. Koirala's promised campaign to educate the population on the merits of direct democracy, however, could lead to violent confrontations between opponents of the present nonparty system and its supporters, who have held political sway in Nepal for nearly two decades. In any event, the King's concession may have little impact on the disorders in the southern and eastern areas of the country, which have been caused by separatists and extremists bent on ousting the monarchy.

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INTERNATIONAL: Desert Locust Control

Locust control efforts in South Asia, the Arabian Peninsula, and Sudan, as well as an uneven distribution of rainfall in winter breeding areas, have significantly reduced the threat of a major locust infestation in Sudan and the Sahel during the coming summer months. US officials who attended the early May session of the Food and Agriculture Organization's Desert Locust Control Committee in Rome report that no swarming had been observed in India, Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, or Sudan--all key breeding areas in the past year.

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